(c) the manner in which the Director-General, Shipping determines whether a large ship or fishing boat is "sea-worthy";

(d) whether it is a fact that there are complaints on the un-predictable pattern of behaviour of the personnel of Director-General, Shipping in making inspections and suggestions; and

(e) the steps proposed to assess the work of all surveyors on their pattern of work?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. However, the Government of India has also delegated under the Merchant Shipping Act, the work of survey, certification and inspection for ascertaining the seaworthiness of vessel to classification societies.

(c) The criteria for determining the sea-worthiness condition of a large ship or fishing boat is prescribed in Merchant Shipping Rules framed under Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.

(d) and (e) Complaints received from time to time, against surveyors are immediately investigated by the Director General of Shipping and appropriate disciplinary/vigilance action is taken. The assessment of work done by the surveyors is undertaken through superiors and controlling officers. In addition, the feedback from the industry is taken into account in assessing their performance.

Telephone connections by 2010

*256. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set a target of 250 million telephone connections by 2007 and 500 million by 2010;

(b) whether the pace of providing telephones is sufficient to meet these targets and whether Government propose to introduce more operators for achieving it;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government propose to make it compulsory for all the operators to make use of all technologies for achieving spectral efficiency and thereby requiring less spectrum which would help in introducing more competition; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATON TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Against the target of 250 million telephone connections by December 2007, we have reached about 233 million connections by 31st July 2007.

Looking to the present additions per month, it is expected that the target of 250 million would be achieved before the year end.

(e) and (f) New Telecom Policy (NTP) 99 adopts a technology neutral policy.

Ranchi and other cities under JNNURM

t*257. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of such parts of Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, and other cities of the State which have been included for improvement under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission;

(b) the details of the amount allocated for Jharkhand under this scheme and by when it is likely to be implemented;

(c) whether there is any difficulty in implementing this scheme in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Three cities namely Ranchi, Dhanbad and Jamshedpur are covered under Urban Infrastructure and Governance (UIG) component of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM).

(b) to (d) The Planning Commission has made indicative allocation of a sum of Rs. 641.20 crore and Rs. 70.53 crore for the sub-Mission on UIG and a sum of Rs. 114.52 crore and Rs. 12.60 crore for UIDSSMT for the entire Mission period (2005-12) and for 2007-08 respectively in respect of State of Jharkhand.

However, funds have not been released to any of cities in Jharkhand so far, as Jharkhand has not yet signed Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Central Government for implementation of mandatory/optional reforms as required under the guidelines of JNNURM for accessing funds. No Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been received from Jharkhand State so far.

Corruption in Panchayati Raj

*258. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that panchayati raj in most of the States is a ground, for breeding corruption; and

(b) by when panchayati raj would be really successful in people's projects in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) While there are reports of corruption in Panchayati Raj, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj does not share the view that Panchayati Raj Institutions, generally speaking, are breeding grounds for corruption. With respect to individual cases of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.